



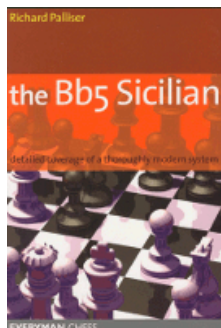
COLUMNISTS

Over the Horizons

Charles Galofre



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A Rossolimo Sicilian Gambit

In recent months we've discussed an all gambit repertoire including the Moscow Sicilian Gambit ([December 2011](#)) and a Scotch Gambit Repertoire ([November 2011](#)). This month we will talk about the Rossolimo. I like this gambit because it comes in a line commonly played by Black. This means you will reach this position in a majority of your games, making it a wise practical choice; thus, an advantage of some sorts. The line I'm recommending is one of the most aggressive, where we give a center pawn to try to accelerate our initiative and advantage in time. It is an unclear gambit but it leads to interesting play.

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5



[FEN "r1bqkbnr/pp1pppp/2n5/1Bp5/4P3/5N2/PPPP1PPP/RNBQK2R b KQkq - 0 3"]

The Rossolimo Variation.

3...g6

Black's most common response.

4.0-0 Bg7 5.c3 Nf6

This is how the majority of games proceed. In the current position, a range of moves have been tried: 6.Re1 (classical), 6.e5 (natural), and 6.d4 (ambitious). The latter is my recommendation.

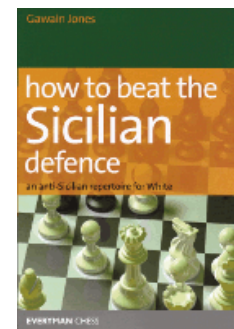
6.d4



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6...cxd4

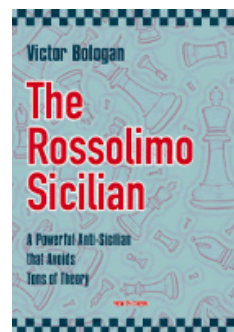
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This natural-looking move is the most inferior response. True, the exchange of pawns leaves White with an isolated pawn, but it opens the position, giving White the c3-square for the knight and the c-file for the rooks.

After 6...Nxe4, White gets compensation with 7.d5:



[FEN "r1bqk2r/pp1ppbp/2n3p1/1BpP4/n3/2P2N2/PP3PPP/RNBQ1RK1 b kq - 0 7"]

We can appreciate that White has positional compensation in that he will acquire two tempi: one by attacking the c6-knight and the next with Re1 attacking the e4-knight. And if Black moves the knight from c6, it may prove to be misplaced. It is already a highly complex and interesting position.

7...Nb8 8.Re1 Nd6 9.Bd3 White will play Bg5 and continue developing harmoniously. Meanwhile, Black has to resolve the development of the knight on b8.

7...Na5 8.Re1 Nd6 9.Bf1 0-0 10.Bg5 Re8 11.Nbd2 Black is lagging in development. If 11...h6, then 12.Bf4. In general, Black lacks squares for his pieces. The misplaced knight takes away a5 from the queen, and the diagonal for the dark-squared bishop is blocked.

7...Nd6 8.Bd3

A) 8...Nb8 9.Re1 0-0 10.Bf4 (10.Na3 Na6) with concrete play for White.

B) 8...Na5 9.Bf4 0-0 10.Na3 b6 11.Rc1 with the idea of b4 and White will gain the initiative.

C) 8...Ne5 The most natural move, towards the center and exchanging pieces. 9.Nxe5 Bxe5 10.Re1 A small step that leads to big things.

C1) 10...Bf6 11.Bh6 and the black king will remain in the center. 11...Nf5 (11...Qb6 12.Qd2; 11...b5 12.Qf3 Nf5) 12.Bxf5 gxf5 13.Qh5 Rg8+/-.

C2) 10...Bg7 11.Qe2 and Black still has trouble castling. The white pieces develop with threats. 11...e6 (11...f6 12.Bf4; 11...e5 12.Bh6 0-0) 12.Bf4 Qe7 13.Na3 0-0 14.Rad1 A beautiful snapshot of the position. 14...e5 (14...Ne8) 15.Bxe5 Qxe5 16.Qxe5 Bxe5 17.Rxe5 Rb8.

### **7.cxd4 Nxe4**

7...d5 is a typical break for Black in the Sicilian, and here is no exception. However, White has an elegant way of playing against this plan. By advancing his pawn, he gains space; and by retreating his knight, followed by f3, he brilliantly causes disharmony in Black's position. Moreover, material is even here, and White's advantage is tangible.

A) 8.e5!+/- Ne4 (8...Ng8 9.Nc3) 9.Ne1!



[FEN "r1bqk2r/pp2ppbp/2n3p1/1B1pP3/3Pn3/8/PP3PPP/RNBQNRK1 b kq - 0 9"]

A1) 9...h6 10.f3 Ng5 11.Nc3 0-0 (11...Ne6 12.Nc2 0-0 13.Be3; 11...Bd7 12.Be3) 12.Be3 Ne6 White has a space advantage and all his pieces are more purposely placed.(12...Qb6 13.Ba4).

A2) 9...f6 10.f3 Ng5 11.Bxg5 fxg5 12.Nc3 0-0 (12...Bd7 13.Rf2) 13.Rc1 Na5 b4 and White is just clearly better. (The threat is Nxd5.)

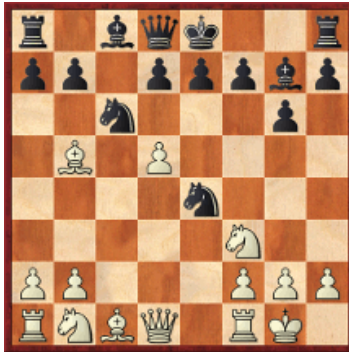
A3) 9...Qb6 10.a4

A3a) 10...0-0 11.Bxc6 bxc6 12.a5 Qb5 (12...Qc7 13.f3 Ba6+/-) 13.Na3 Qxa5 +/-.

A3b) 10...a6 11.Bxc6+ bxc6+/-.

B) 8.Ne5!? Qb6 9.Qa4 Nxe4 10.Nxc6.

### 8.d5



[FEN "r1bqk2r/pp1ppbp/2n3p1/1B1P4/4n3/5N2/PP3PPP/RNBQ1RK1 b kq - 0 8"]

This is the purest form of the gambit. With all lines open, it is an interesting, complex position.

### 8...Nd6 9.Na3 a6

9...Ne5 is natural: 10.Nxe5 Bxe5 11.Re1

A) 11...Nxb5 12.Rxe5 gives White a clear advantage. 12...f6 (12...d6) 13.Nxb5! fxe5 14.d6!+/-.

B) 11...Bg7 12.Bg5 f6 compensation.

C) 11...Bf6 12.Bh6.

### 10.Bd3



[FEN "r1bqk2r/1p1pppbp/p1nn2p1/3P4/8/N2B1N2/PP3PPP/R1BQ1RK1 b kq - 0 10"]

### 10...Ne5

10...Na7 11.Re1 0-0 12.Nc4 Nxc4 13.Bxc4 b5 (13...d6 14.Bg5) 14.Bb3 d6 (14...Re8) 15.Bg5 Re8 16.Qd2 Bf6 17.Bxf6 exf6 18.Rxe8+ Qxe8 19.Re1 Qd8 20.Nd4 Bd7 21.Ne6.

### 11.Nxe5 Bxe5 12.Re1 Bf6 13.Qb3



[FEN "r1bqk2r/1p1ppp1p/p2n1bp1/3P4/8/NQ1B4/PP3PPP/R1B1R1K1 b kq - 0 13"]

The position is unclear.

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Charles welcomes your questions; currently he is a full-time instructor and is available for lessons. Contact him directly via his [Chess Training School](#).

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